

REMARKS

Status of the claims:

With the above amendment, claims 26-42 and 70-71 are canceled, and claims 44, 66 and 72-73 have been amended. Claims 44, 46, 48, and 50-69, and 72-84 are pending and ready for further action on the merits. No new matter has been added by way of the above amendments. Claim 44 has been amended simply to make it clearer. In particular, Applicants have amended claim 44 to make it clear that the first percentage (i.e., 0.01-1.0%) refers to the weight of the fiber whereas the second percentage refers to the weight of the finish. Claim 66 has been amended by the insertion of the subject matter of claim 44. Entry of the amendments and reconsideration is respectfully requested in light of the following remarks.

Examiner Interview

Applicants and Applicants representative would like to thank the Examiner for meeting for an Interview on January 5, 2004 and for the Examiner's input as to how to overcome the art of record. The gist of the Interview is as appears in the Interview Summary form.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants have canceled the method claims as suggested by the Examiner and have amended the claims in accordance with the Examiner's suggestions.

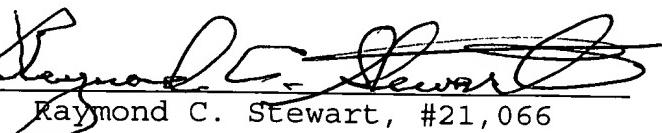
Thus, with the above remarks and amendments, Applicants believe that the claims, as they now stand, define patentable subject matter such that passage of the instant invention to allowance is warranted. A Notice to that effect is earnestly solicited.

If any questions remain regarding the above matters, please contact Applicant's representative, T. Benjamin Schroeder (Reg. No. 50,990), in the Washington metropolitan area at the phone number listed below.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

By 
Raymond C. Stewart, #21,066

RCS/TBS/mua

P.O. Box 747
Falls Church, VA 22040-0747
(703) 205-8000